

Mr. T. S. Ramachandra Ayyar (Chittur-Tattamangalam): I have no objection in not pressing this resolution, if the Government accepts the principle that the honorary visitors are allowed to visit these hospitals according to their convenience, of course, after giving due intimation to the doctor as a matter of courtesy. But the present system is *prima facie* absurd.

Dr. T. Verghese (Chief Medical Officer): The present practice does not object anybody going into the hospital.

Resolution, by leave, withdrawn

Mr. C. V. Iyyu (Kunnamkulam): I have sent in a request that resolution No. 3 in the agenda may be allowed to be moved in the place of my resolution No. 15, so that it may be taken up after resolution No. 8. I intend withdrawing resolution No. 15.

RESOLUTION No 3

Establishing local committees for issuing permits for the sale of rice, sugar, jaggery, pulses, millets, tapioca, etc.

Mr. A. B. Salem (Mattancheri): I rise to move that "*this Council recommends to the Government that in the matter of control of food stuffs—rice, sugar, jaggery, pulses, millets, tapioca, etc., local committees composed of not more than three members be established in Mattancheri, Ernakulam and Trichur for the issue of the permits for the sale of articles above said for the use of inhabitants of the localities and dealers and stockists be directed to issue the articles on such permits at control prices.*"

Sir, it should be well known by this time the great difficulties that people have to get food stuffs of various kinds that they require, particularly essential commodities like rice, sugar, kerosene oil, etc. Now, you have established control, control regarding the import, control regarding the export, control regarding the quantity that could be possessed, control regarding the price at which commodities can be secured and so on. All restrictions always operate for enhancing prices. Whenever there is a difficulty placed in getting any article, then immediately prices rise for that particular kind of article. So, the result of control, whatever be the object with which the control has been established, is to push up prices and the object of the control is to keep down prices and to enable people to get these commodities at certain fixed prices which are called "control prices". Now, Sir, it is well known to those who have had the difficulties of getting things, that it is not always that people can get things at control prices. Yesterday, I was at Quilon, where the price of rice was fixed at Rs. 16—14—0 by the Travancore Government, but a bag of rice was purchased at Rs. 38. Now, that shows you that in spite of the vigorous measures that Government have taken and that Government is prosecuting very big people there, nevertheless prices go up. Here also, where the shop is entirely within the control of Government, you can get it at control prices. The same bag of rice elsewhere you can only get at non-control prices which are always higher. If you establish control, people should get things at that price; otherwise the very control is useless. What is your control? You have now got fair price shops. That is alright. It will work because it is under Government supervision, and it is a great relief to the poor people in places where these shops are established. That I grant. But in the ordinary market, people get immense difficulties, and who can know these difficulties more than the local people? Therefore, I suggest that local people including the officers of Government—a committee of 2 or 3—may be established in these particular towns, because they are all thickly populated places and it is not possible always to get at the officer himself. The officer may have other duties. He may have a wider circle to visit. To avoid these difficulties and to make it easy for the people to get things, you may have 2 or 3 men appointed for the purpose of getting articles to be purchased from the stockists or dealers at the particular control prices fixed up by the Government and it will be advantageous during these days. Without some system by which an authority can give a permit and say "go and buy from such-and-such a place such-and-such an article at the control price", there is no use of control. For instance it was said that a lawyer went 3 or 4 times to a shop to get one maund of sugar. He was asked to go and take it from a particular shop at a particular price. He could not get it. On the 6th visit he got 3 pounds. What is the use of that permit? Therefore, if there are local people in the immediate vicinity to take in any complaint and also to investigate and also to direct the giving of all permits for getting things, it would be useful.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan (Chalakkudi): Why not, the lawyer complain to the Police?

Mr. A. B. Salem (Mattancheri): The lawyer may have some other work to do. The giver of the money agrees to take it at whatever prices. He is in dire necessity. It is a vicious circle in which we are moving and there must be some help given by Government. I know the difficulties of the Commissioner of Civil Supplies. He is surrounded by people when difficult times come and it is not possible for one person to attend to all the people that come there. Now, people from all parts of the State have to go to him. From various places they have to go. Take the passage money that they have to spend, the time they have to spend, in terms of money, and then the price that he pays for the goods will be much more. Therefore, in the particular areas where the people can easily get at the persons appointed to control these things you must have committees of this kind in order that the committee will know where the stockists are. Now-a-days, every week, the stocks are informed and the stock list is there, the quantity available is there, and rationing can be done and according to the rationing of things, these committees can be directed to give the permit and if a permit is taken to a dealer who is known to have stocks, he must be bound to give, and if he fails to get the article, complaints can be taken easily to the committee and on the recommendation of the committee prosecution can be launched. Any officer however good and however hardworking he may be, will not be able to do things in the way in which it will be most beneficial to the people. Therefore, I commend this proposition for the acceptance of the House.

The House adjourned for lunch at 1 p.m., and re-assembled at 2-30 p.m., with M. R. Ry. K. Ayyappan Avl., Deputy President, in the Chair.

Mr. A. B. Salem (Mattancheri): I have said enough.

Deputy President: Nobody has seconded the resolution. The next resolution stands in the name of Mr. Moothedan.

Mr. A. B. Salem (Mattancheri): Sir, you asked me to speak. I said I have said enough. Then you asked, is there anybody to second the resolution? I thought that somebody was speaking.

Deputy President: Then I waited a while, to see whether there was any body to second it. There was nobody to second it. Afterwards I announced to the House that the motion was not seconded. Still I waited awhile. Then I called Mr. Moothedan's name. Even now, if this House is in favour of allowing the discussion of the resolution, I have no objection.

Mr. M. K. Devassy (Adur): Then I would like to second it.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan (Chalakkudi): Then I would oppose the resolution. The declared object of my friend the Member for Mattancheri is to assist the Civil Supplies Commissioner in the discharge of his onerous duties and also to enable people to get these food stuffs at a reasonable price or rather at the price fixed by the Government. I entirely agree with my learned friend the Hon'ble Member for Mattancheri in this desirable object. Nobody will dispute that object. Every body in this House will support that object. But the point is by accepting this motion, can we go one inch further for achieving that object? I may say it will be only putting obstacles in the way of getting our supplies. Not only that, it is impractical and complicated. I would ask Hon'ble members, to whom is this committee responsible? Is it to the Civil Supplies Commissioner, or to the Diwan or to the Secretary to Government? If it is a Government committee, it will be responsible to Government, and are they going to transact business independently of the Government? I did not hear any whisper from my friend on that point. That is one point. It is stated "food stuffs", they are essential commodities. For kerosene oil there should be a similar committee. So, that would be duplicating the work. Then I would ask the Hon'ble member, is it a non-official committee or is it a committee consisting of official members? We do not know. If I am to understand correctly, in the towns of Ernakulam and Mattancheri, the population is about one lakh, and if the object of the committee is to issue permits, they will have to sit all day to issue permits. They ought to be Government servants. It is not an advisory body. If it is an advisory body, I would have supported the resolution. In the resolution it is stated "food stuffs—rice, sugar, jaggery, pulses, millets, tapioca, etc., local committees composed of not more than three members be established in Mattancheri, Ernakulam and Trichur for the issue of the permits for the sale of articles above-said for the use of the inhabitants of the localities and dealers and stockists be directed to issue the articles on such permits at control prices". So the function of this committee will be to issue permits. Now, what are the principles which will regulate their conduct? If it is only to issue permits the Civil Supplies Commissioner may be asked to appoint clerks. He has issued the rules for the supplies to each individual or class of people. According to those rules, these

clerks will issue permits. So, no committee is necessary. So, I strongly oppose a non-official committee being asked to issue permits. If my friend's idea is to appoint a local advisory committee, I would have no objection. It will advise the Civil Supplies Commissioner or Government from time to time as to the manner in which permits should be issued and what quantities should be given to each individual or class of individuals. Just as we have got the fair price shops in the rural areas and the Panchayat people to advise them, you may have respectable people whose function is advisory. But their function should not be to issue permits which a clerk will do. If the work of the committee is to issue permits, will any respectable people come and work, because they will have to sit from morning till night, to meet the requirements of the large population in Ernakulam and Mattancheri.

Mr. A. B. Salem (Mattancheri): No, no.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan (Chalakkudi): Then what is the meaning of "issue permits by the committee". It is not clear to me. Therefore, it is thoroughly impracticable and it is unnecessary for achieving the object which my friend has got in view.

Regarding the supply of these essentials I think so far as Ernakulam, I have got some idea that it is working satisfactorily because now the municipality is issuing the permits and they have fixed certain standards according to the tax of the house or some other criterion. Now there is no difficulty at all. But there will never be universal satisfaction. There will always be grounds for complaints, but the question is we should give the maximum satisfaction and so far as Ernakulam is concerned, the present system is alright. The supplies which the Civil Supplies Commissioner can give to Ernakulam, can be entrusted to the municipality and the municipality will distribute the same according to certain principles. I do not find any difficulty at all. My learned friend quoted the instance of a lawyer friend's experiences. I would say he is a coward. When the sugar is so very scarce why should the officer issue a permit for one maund of sugar. My friend said he was given permit for one maund of sugar and he got only 3 pounds.

Mr. A. B. Salem (Mattancheri): I didn't say that.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan (Chalakkudi): He may be making statements which he forgets especially after the lunch. What is the difficulty now? At the present time, the municipality is the best to distribute sugar, etc., to the people concerned and the Civil Supplies Commissioner should place at the disposal of each municipality the available quantity of sugar intended for that particular municipality, and to see whether the municipal authorities are properly doing it, we may appoint an Advisory Committee as suggested by Mr. Salem, but they should not issue permits.

മിസ്റ്റർ വി. കെ. കുട്ടി: സർ, ഈ പ്രമേയത്തെ അനുകൂലിക്കുവാൻ നിവൃത്തിയില്ല. പ്രമേയത്തിൽ വിവക്ഷിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നതുപോലെ അനേകം കമ്മിറ്റികൾ ഉണ്ടാകുന്ന പക്ഷവും ഇന്നത്തെ വിഷമതകൾക്കു ഒരു മാറ്റവും വരുക്കയില്ലെന്നാണ് എന്റെ ദൃഢമായ വിശ്വാസം. പെർമിറ്റ് കൊടുക്കുവാൻ മാത്രം രണ്ടു മൂന്നു കമ്മിറ്റികൾ വേണമെന്നു മിസ്റ്റർ സേലം ആവശ്യപ്പെടുന്നതിൽ തീരെ കാര്യം ഇല്ലായ്കയില്ല. പെർമിറ്റുകൾ പലപ്പോഴും യഥാകാലം കിട്ടുന്നില്ലെന്നൊരാഴ്ചപമുണ്ട്. ആ സംഗതിയെ അടിസ്ഥാനപ്പെടുത്തിക്കൊണ്ടാണ് ഈ പ്രമേയം കൊണ്ടുവന്നിട്ടുള്ളതെന്നവിശ്വാസം എനിക്കില്ല. എത്രയായാലും പെർമിറ്റിനെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം കുറെ വിഷമങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടാകുന്നുണ്ടെന്നു സംഗതി ഞാൻ ഇവിടെ അനുസ്മരിച്ചുകൊള്ളുന്നു. സപ്ലൈസ് കമ്മീഷണറെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം യാതൊരു കഴപ്പുമില്ല. അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ ആപ്പിസ്റ്റ്സ്റ്റാഫ് പൂർണ്ണമായി ഉജ്ജ്വലസ്വഭാവമായിരുന്നാൽ മാത്രം മതി. ഫെയർ പ്രൈസ് ഷാപ്പുകൾ പ്രയോജനപ്രദങ്ങളാണ്. ഇപ്പോൾ ൧൦൦ ഷാപ്പുകൾ തുടങ്ങുവാനാണല്ലോ ഗവർണ്മെന്റ് തീരുമാനിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളത്. ഈ ൧൦൦ ഷാപ്പുകൾ കൊണ്ട് ഓരോ സ്ഥലത്തെയും റെയിററ ലെവൽ ചെയ്യുന്നതിന്നു ഉപയുക്തങ്ങളായിത്തീരുന്നതു വിസ്മരിക്കുക വയ്യ.

ഈ അവസരത്തിൽ ഒരു കാര്യം എനിക്കു ഗവണ്മെന്റിനെ ഉൽബോധിപ്പിക്കുവാൻണ്ട്. നമ്മുടെ സ്റ്റോറിൽനിന്നു നമുക്ക് പ്രത്യാശ എത്ര അരി കിട്ടും; ആ അരി ഓരോ കുടുംബത്തിന്നും എത്രകുണ്ട് വീതം വിഭജിക്കുവാൻ കഴിയും എന്നൊന്നു കണക്കാക്കേണ്ടതാവശ്യമാണ്. ആ കണക്കനുസരിച്ചുള്ള അരി ഒരു നാഴിയായാലും രണ്ടു നാഴിയായാലും ഓരോ കുടുംബത്തിന്നും യഥാകാലം ലഭിക്കുവാൻ സൗകര്യം ഉണ്ടാക്കുകയാണു ഇന്നത്തെ ഏറ്റവും വലിയ ആവശ്യകത. ഒരു വില്ലേജിൽ ഫെയർ പ്രൈസ് ഷാപ്പ് സ്ഥാപിച്ചാൽ അവിടെയുള്ളവർക്കു രണ്ടുനാഴി അരി കിട്ടിയേക്കാം. എന്നാൽ അതിന്നു പുറത്തുള്ള ആളുകൾക്കു പഴയ നിലതന്നെയാണുള്ളത്. മറ്റുള്ള ദേശങ്ങളിൽ, ഗവണ്മെന്റിൽനിന്നും ലൈസൻസുകൊടുക്കുന്ന കച്ചവടക്കാരെ നോമിനേറ്റചെയ്ത് അവർക്കു അരികൊടുക്കുക. അതിന്നു ശേഷം

അവിടെയുള്ള ഓരോ കഡംബത്തിനും ഇത്ര അരിവിതം കൊടുക്കണമെന്നു കണക്കാക്കി അരിവിതരണം കാർഡ് മുഖേന നടത്തുക. ആ കാർഡ് അവർ എവിടെ കൊണ്ടുചെന്നാലും ഗവർണ്മെൻറ് റെയിറ്ററിനു അരി കിട്ടാറായിരിക്കണം. ഇങ്ങിനെ ഒരു പദ്ധതി സ്വീകരിക്കുന്നതു പ്രായോഗികമായിരിക്കുമെന്നു എനിക്കുതോന്നുന്നു. തൊട്ടതിനെല്ലാം കമ്മറികൾ രൂപവൽക്കരിക്കുന്നതീതി ഒരു സാംക്രമിക രോഗംപോലെയായിരുന്നിരിക്കുന്നു. കാര്യക്ഷമത, പ്രായോഗികത ഇതാണു ഇപ്പോഴും എപ്പോഴും ആവശ്യം. നാട്ടിന്റെയും നാട്ടാരുടേയും സ്ഥിതിഗതികളെപ്പറ്റി അറിവുള്ളവർ നൽകുന്ന പ്രായോഗിക നിർദ്ദേശങ്ങളിൽ ഉത്തമമായവയെ സ്വീകരിച്ചു സിവിൽസപ്ലൈസ് കമ്മീഷണർ അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ അനുഭവങ്ങളെ മുൻനിർത്തി വേണ്ടതു യഥാകാലം പ്രവർത്തിച്ചാൽ മതിയാകുമെന്നാണു എന്റെ പക്ഷം.

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (Commissioner of Civil Supplies): The resolution has to be opposed. First of all it is an unworkable proposition. Secondly, the limited scope that is given to it makes it unnecessary. I should come to that first before I go to the 2nd, that is that a committee be appointed in the towns of Mattancheri, Ernakulam and Trichur for the issue of permits. So far as these 3 towns are concerned, we have got full-fledged municipalities and the work of distribution of food stuffs as any other things necessary for the residents of these towns has always to be entrusted to the municipal councils and unless we see by experience that they do not discharge their duties properly, there is no justification for anybody intruding and putting overboard extra persons. Several food stuffs are mentioned in the resolution. Rice, sugar, jaggery, pulses, millets, tapioca, etc. So far as rice is concerned at any rate, the 3 municipalities mentioned here are tackling the problem in the way in which they and the Government at present think should be tackled and that is by the establishment of rice depots. We began with one or two depots. Now, the depots have increased to such a large extent that in the Trichur Municipality the quantity of rice that is sold in these depots—they are 10 in number—is about 100 bags per day, in Ernakulam 30—35 and in Mattancheri 65 bags. Therefore the working of these municipal depots in the matter of distribution does a very great service in the distribution of rice and the municipalities are feeling their responsibilities in the matter of attending to this problem more and more earnestly than was thought necessary at the outset. So that, to take it away from them and entrust it to a body of 3 or 4 persons as suggested here is at this stage, I should think, rather doing a great injustice to them. Anything more at this stage is not called for. If it has to be done, it has to be done on the basis of rationing. If it becomes necessary, rationing should not be limited to the municipalities. It must be spread over the whole country. With reference to rationing there is one very important draw-back which we cannot lose sight of. If we have recourse to that final procedure, every grain of paddy available with every individual must be taken by the Government and put in the hotch-pot. Then there will be equitable distribution of the quantity which is available with all persons and everybody will be fed equally well or equally ill. Otherwise, that will be a very difficult problem. The reasons are obvious. We are getting a quota on the basis of certain calculations adopted for that purpose by a Government which is giving us that quota. There, the first principle that is taken into consideration is this. They assume that per capita consumption is so much, which according to our notions is rather low. But assume that this is correct, what is it that we would get? Every man is treated similarly for the purpose of that particular rationing. So many nazhies, or so many ounces. What is it that we practically find now? The man who has got the paddy fields and the man who feeds any number of other persons, depending upon that particular man, persons of that type, our temples and our other institutions which have got plenty of paddy at their call, they are fed to the full. And what happens to the poor man? He is poorly fed. On the basis of what we get from outside, we have to ration what little we have. The question of rationing can be adopted only at a stage when we are prepared to follow the other procedure, commandeer every grain of paddy that is available in the land, put every body on the same basis, treat the man, woman, child and the rich and the poor, all persons on the same basis. Are you prepared to do that? If you are not prepared to do that, then we cannot follow the principle of rational rationing. The only procedure that we can follow is the one we are following here. Try to distribute what we get as best as we can until rationing becomes absolutely essential. With reference to rice, therefore, no other method can at present be adopted.

Coming next to sugar, that is entirely a different type of commodity. It is not produced here. No. Therefore, with reference to sugar it is possible for Government to ration.

Mr. A. B. Salem (Mattancheri): What is the total quantity of paddy available in our country?

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (*Commissioner of Civil Supplies*): We are taking a census.

Mr. A. B. Salem (*Mattancheri*): What does the return that has already been made show?

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (*Commissioner of Civil Supplies*): We have not got any complete list and unless the list is complete, it is not possible to say anything on that point.

മിസ്റ്റർ എം. കെ. ദേവസ്സി: എത്രകാലമായി ഈ ലിസ്റ്റ് എടുത്തു തുടങ്ങിയിട്ടു്?

മിസ്റ്റർ എ. മാധവപ്രഭു: കണക്കു എടുക്കുവാൻ ആരും ശ്രമിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടായിരുന്നില്ല. ഇപ്പോഴെ ശ്രമിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളു. കന്നി മാസം-യാണു് ന ൦ ൦ പറയിൽ കൂടുതൽ നെല്ല് കൈവശമുള്ള ജന്മിമാരും കുടിയാന്മാരും കണക്കു ബോധിപ്പിക്കണമെന്നു് പറഞ്ഞിട്ടുള്ളതു്. എന്നാൽ ഇതുവരെയും ശരിയായ കണക്കു കിട്ടിയിട്ടില്ല. കൂടാതെ ഓരോരുത്തരുടേയും വീട്ടിൽ പോയി പരിശോധിച്ചു് അവരുടെ കൈവശമുള്ള നെല്ലിന്റെ കണക്കു് എടുക്കുന്നതിന്നു് ഒരു ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥനെക്കൊണ്ടും സാധ്യമാണെന്നു തോന്നുന്നില്ല. അവർ സ്റ്റോറുമെൻ്റ് കൊടുത്താൽ അതു തയ്യാറാക്കി ഒരു കണക്കെടുപ്പുവാനെ തല്ലാലം സാധ്യമാകയുള്ളു.

Mr. A. B. Salem (*Mattancheri*): Are they not asked to send returns?

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (*Commissioner of Civil Supplies*): The 1st statement was due on the 31st of October, and then on the 15th and the last day of every Malayalam month. In some places they wanted time, because the harvest was not over. Some people think that they are not bound to submit the statement. Recently in the last Gazette we have amended the legislation. These are all emergency legislations and emergency legislations are bound to be defective. We presume that in the course of another fortnight we may be in a position to get these stock returns.

മിസ്റ്റർ എം. എൽ. ജോസഫ്: ഈ കണക്കു് മുഴുവനും വരുമ്പോഴേക്കും നെല്ലു മുഴുവനും പുറത്തേക്കു് പോയിക്കഴിയുമെന്നു് ഗവണ്മെന്റിന്നറിയാമോ?

മിസ്റ്റർ എ. മാധവപ്രഭു: കണക്കു കിട്ടിയതുകൊണ്ടു നെല്ലു കിട്ടുകയില്ല. കണക്കു കിട്ടാത്തതുകൊണ്ടു നെല്ലു പോകാതെയിരിക്കുകയുമില്ല. നെല്ലു പുറത്തു പോകാതെയിരിക്കണമെങ്കിൽ അതിന്നു വേറെ വഴി നോക്കണം.

മിസ്റ്റർ എം. എൽ. ജോസഫ്: എന്നാൽ ഈ കണക്കിന്റെ ആവശ്യമെന്താണു്?

മിസ്റ്റർ എ. മാധവപ്രഭു: കണക്കു വേറെ ആവശ്യത്തിന്നാണു്.

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. എൻ. ഇട്ടിരവി നമ്പൂതിരിപ്പാട്: ഇതുവരെ എത്ര ആളുകൾ കണക്കു ചിട്ടുണ്ടു്?

മിസ്റ്റർ എ. മാധവപ്രഭു: Of course, they have sent. ഈ നമ്പറൊക്കെ ചോദിച്ചാൽ എങ്ങിനെ പറയുവാൻ സാധിക്കും?

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. എൻ. ഇട്ടിരവി നമ്പൂതിരിപ്പാട്: കടലാസ്സിന്നു് വളരെ ക്ഷാമമുള്ള ഇക്കാലത്തു് ഇതുപോലെ ഒരു കണക്കെടുത്തുകൊടുക്കുകയെന്നുള്ളതു് വളരെ കഠിനമാണു്.

മിസ്റ്റർ എ. മാധവപ്രഭു: ൧ ൫ ദിവസത്തിനകത്തു കണക്കു കിട്ടിയാലെ ഈ സാധനം എവിടെ പോയി എന്നറിഞ്ഞുകൂടു.

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. എൻ. ഇട്ടിരവി നമ്പൂതിരിപ്പാട്: സാധനങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടാക്കലും, കണക്കുണ്ടാക്കലും തമ്മിൽ ബന്ധമില്ലെന്നു് ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മെമ്പർതന്നെ പറഞ്ഞുവല്ലോ?

മിസ്റ്റർ എ. മാധവപ്രഭു: കണക്കുണ്ടാക്കലും സാധനങ്ങളും തമ്മിൽ യാതൊരു ബന്ധവുമില്ല.

That is the situation so far as rice is concerned.

Mr. A. B. Salem (*Mattancheri*): Some people in Cochin have paddy lands in Travancore and they cannot bring their paddy for their own consumption this side without reciprocal arrangement being come to. If Cochin is agreeable to do the same thing with reference to the paddy owned in Cochin by the people of Travancore, Travancore will allow the residents in Cochin to bring paddy from Travancore.

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (*Commissioner of Civil Supplies*): The matter is under correspondence.

Coming to sugar, as I said, it is a commodity which is not produced here, but which comes from outside. Therefore every pinch of that commodity is possible to be controlled and in that commodity we have attempted rationing in all the municipalities and we are to a very large extent successful.

Mr. A. B. Salem (*Mattancheri*): Is the import of sugar by merchants free?

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (*Commissioner of Civil Supplies*): Only, the Sugar Controller will not allow it. Every sugar factory is under the control of the Sugar Controller and no one, so far as I know.

can import any quantity unless there is a permit for it from the Sugar Controller I do not know, if going beyond all these things, they can manage to import sugar.

Mr. A. B. Salem (Mattancheri): I was only asking whether the import of sugar into, the State is free.

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (Commissioner of Civil Supplies): We have no objection to anybody bringing it here. But the moment it comes to the Harbour station here, they must let me have a return that they have so much sugar and then it is under my control. The rationing of sugar is working properly so far as I know, as stated by the Member for Chalakkudi.

Mr. A. B. Salem (Mattancheri): You say that when the sugar comes to Cochin, immediately, it must be reported to the Commissioner of Civil Supplies and then it must be regulated by the Commissioner in regard to the distribution. There are 80,000 tons of sugar available say in Bihar after setting apart reserves and for their own consumption excess, they say that they have more quantities of sugar in the new crushing. There will be plenty of sugar and there is no dearth of sugar. Under those circumstances, I am asking the question whether our Government is making sugar free. Because there is plenty of sugar, the merchants are prepared to bring sugar. I am asking what is the objection if sugar is available in the country and people are prepared to bring it here and sell it. What is the reason not to make it free?

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (Commissioner of Civil Supplies): There is no objection to anybody bringing in sugar, if they can. But what I say is, so far as I know, it is not possible to do so. It is not a thing which they can bring. I also read in the papers that we have got 2 million tons of excess sugar and the excess production is in the coming year. All the 2 million tons are under the control of the Sugar Controller and unless he allows a quota to the merchants and allow the railway authorities to export that quota, they cannot bring it. We have no objection to their bringing in any quantity. By what conceivable method they will bring, I do not know.

Mr. C. V. Iyyu (Kunnamkulam): May I know whether the authorities in Cochin will prosecute the person who brings sugar into the State? By some hook or crook? Will our Government take action against them?

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (Commissioner of Civil Supplies): Import is not prohibited and so long as it is not prohibited I do not think that the person who imports it can be penalised.

Deputy President: The time is more precious than sugar for the House. The members want to know whether you will object people importing sugar from outside. You have answered that there is no restriction if they can get sugar from outside, and that when once it is brought here, it will be under the control of the Commissioner of Civil Supplies. That question has been answered. There is no use of asking any more questions.

Mr. A. B. Salem (Mattancheri): My question was whether he has made it free. When a person brings sugar from outside and if that sugar is to be tied up by the Government, what is the incentive for bringing? That is why I put the question. What is the reason of the Government, when there is plenty of sugar?

Deputy President: The ability to bring sugar here is only problematical. Whatever may be the quantity available outside, the quantity we are able to get is limited. Therefore Government should have control over it.

Mr. A. B. Salem (Mattancheri): Apart from the Government I am telling there are people who can bring sugar. You are not allowing them to bring sugar.

Deputy President: Government are sure that they cannot get sugar over and above the quota allowed.

Mr. A. B. Salem (Mattancheri): The position is that sugar is available outside and it is possible to bring a quantity of sugar into Cochin. But if the policy of Government is that whenever sugar is brought to Cochin, it is tied up by Government. What is the incentive?

Mr. M. K. Devassy (Adur): May I suggest that it is not in the public interest to move that question before Government, and make the Government answer. It involves a huge commitment on the part of the Government with regard to the articles smuggled from British India. If sugar is given a quota and we are taking sugar from British India, it is smuggling goods. The policy of the Government should not be changed in the public interest.

Mr. A. B. Salem (Mattancheri): There is no question of smuggling as it is not a contraband article. They can buy sugar in British India and take it anywhere they like, and such people are bringing it here openly. If our Government then step in and say after the sugar is actually brought into the State and get it tied up, then what incentive I ask will people have to bring it?

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (*Commissioner of Civil Supplies*): So far as my experience goes, we have not been able to bring our quota. We got a quota for 900 and odd tons and we have not been able to bring even 200 tons. If anybody brings by stealing it is not a question which I am bound to answer. I know one case in which on account of a previous contract a few hundred bags have been brought into Cochin. Such a thing was possible in those days. There were previous contracts which had to be fulfilled. Sometimes those contracts will be forward contracts. Such contracts have now ceased to exist and so far as wheat and sugar are concerned, the policy of the Government of India is to taboo all such contracts. Even there, there is a legislation. The moment that was done, the possibility of getting sugar except by stealing has ceased. We have a scheme of distribution here. So far as municipalities are concerned, we are working this scheme. Sugar being a commodity which is meant for the high class and middle class people, it is thought not necessary to do so in villages as is done in towns.

Then we come to the question of jaggery, pulses, millets, etc. Tapioca I shall deal with separately. These are commodities which very few people do want and they have not become so scarce. They are all available. Without any permit, whatever you want, you get from the bazaar. No restriction has been placed upon this except to the extent that restriction has been put upon export to British India.

Mr. A. B. Salem (*Mattancheri*): Before you pass from jaggery, you get a quantity of jaggery from Travancore. Is it distributed only to merchants or will it be distributed to private people who have use of jaggery?

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (*Commissioner of Civil Supplies*): Import will be allowed to merchants. Coming to tapioca, that is a commodity which is used as food so far as I know only in Travancore and Cochin and some parts of British Malabar bordering the Taluks of Mukundapuram and Trichur. No other part is using this tapioca as food. As between the two Governments of Travancore and Cochin there is an arrangement by which whatever is wanted here will be permitted to be imported and therefore on account of this particular arrangement and due to the extensive cultivation we have had last year I do not expect that there will be any shortage, especially because we have just stopped the conversion of tapioca into flour unlike Travancore where the industry has so remarkably developed in the course of the last few months.

Mr. M. K. Devassy (*Adur*): Has this conversion been stopped altogether?

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (*Commissioner of Civil Supplies*): Here we have not stopped it. We have to follow Travancore in this respect. Theirs is the biggest producing country. There is no comparison between ours and theirs. Their area of cultivation is 4 and odd lakhs of acres. Ours even inclusive of the area brought into cultivation is only about 9 thousand acres, and their production is 6 lakhs tons and ours 13 thousand and odd tons.

Mr. M. K. Devassy (*Adur*): I challenge the Commissioner of Civil Supplies to come along with me. I shall show him four places where it is being converted.

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (*Commissioner of Civil Supplies*): The matter is not viewed in the way in which it should be viewed. That is the biggest producing country. We are merely following it. And this is the thing which they did only in the last Gazette. We have not had the time to think and decide as to what we should do. I say as a matter of logical consequence, as soon as the export from here is prohibited, they must realise that there should be no conversion. I too heard that they were continuing to convert the ordinary tapioca into flour when I visited some places. And I told some of them "let not this folly continue". We are not going to allow any of it to be exported." And in one or two cases, I refused to give permits to export the flour. But if people are still going to be foolish and everything has to be done by Government, Government will consider what should be done. Government did not want to take a step which the Travancore Government had not taken in this matter, especially in the light of the co-operation of this Government in this and other matters of foodstuff. It is only the day before yesterday that we got the Gazette. We have not had another Gazette after that. We have to think over the matter.

Deputy President: If you had prohibited here also, there will be no conflict with the decision of the Travancore Government.

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (*Commissioner of Civil Supplies*): We are considering that.

Mr. A. B. Salem (*Mattancheri*): First of all the production of tapioca here is not very large. We have not felt any difficulty to get it.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan (*Chalakkudi*): For the last two weeks we had no tapioca in Ernakulam.

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (*Commissioner of Civil Supplies*): One thing you must remember. The moment one Government says we are prepared to allow import of tapioca into your

land we have to come to an arrangement as to the method of import. The Travancore Government allows import. How to get the goods and through whom to get them? There is no use of being impatient over this. One has to face the situation according to the realities.

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. കെ. നായർ : ആളുകളുടെ വയറാണ് സമ്മതിക്കാത്തത്.

മിസ്റ്റർ എ. മാധവപ്രഭു : എന്നാൽപിന്നെ അവിടെ പോയിട്ട് തട്ടിപ്പറിച്ചുകൊണ്ടു പോരുക! അവിടെ പ്രൊഫിബിറ്റ് ചെയ്യുവാൻ പോകുന്നുവെന്ന് അവർ മുൻകൂട്ടി ഞങ്ങളോടു പറഞ്ഞില്ല.

മിസ്റ്റർ ടി. എ. രാമചന്ദ്രയ്യർ : എന്നാൽ എന്തു കോ-ഓപ്പറേഷനാണുള്ളത്?

മിസ്റ്റർ എ. മാധവപ്രഭു : ഇവിടെ ധാരാളമുണ്ട്. പക്ഷെ, രണ്ടാളെയെ കിട്ടുവാനുള്ള വിഷമമുണ്ടായിരുന്നുള്ളൂ.

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. കെ. നായർ : രണ്ടാളെ കിട്ടിയില്ലെങ്കിൽ സാധുക്കളുടെ സ്ഥിതി എന്തായിരിക്കും.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan (Chalakkudi): Why do you depend entirely upon Travancore. In Pariyaram, Chalakkudi and other places, all the tapioca is exported to Parur. All the tapioca produced in Malayattur is exported to Parur. Why can't you allow it to be taken to Ernakulam?

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu (Commissioner of Civil Supplies): Did anybody prevent it from being brought to Ernakulam? What is the use of accusing Government, in all those matters. If Malayattur people do not take tapioca to Ernakulam, what can the Government do?

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. എസ്സ്. പണിക്കർ : തിരുവിതാംകൂറിൽ ഇവിടത്തേക്കാൾ വില കുറവല്ലെ?

മിസ്റ്റർ എ. മാധവപ്രഭു : ഇപ്പോൾ കുറവാണ്. വില എങ്ങനെയാവാം ഞങ്ങൾ ആർഗ്യ ചെയ്യുമ്പോൾ ഇവിടെനിന്നു ചരക്കുകൾ അവിടെ പോകുമെന്ന് പറയുന്നത് സാധാരണയാണ്.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. എസ്സ്. പണിക്കർ : കൊല്ലപുരക്കൽ സൂചി വിലുവാൻ കൊണ്ടുപോകുന്നതുപോലെതല്ലെ തിരുവിതാംകൂറിലേക്ക് കൊണ്ടുപോകുന്നത്?

മിസ്റ്റർ എ. മാധവപ്രഭു : അങ്ങിനെയാണല്ലോ വിചാരിക്കേണ്ടത്.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. എസ്സ്. പണിക്കർ : ബ്രിട്ടീഷിലേക്ക് കടത്തുന്നുണ്ടോ?

മിസ്റ്റർ എ. മാധവപ്രഭു : അതുണ്ടായിരിക്കാം.

For these reasons, first of all, there is no necessity for it. Secondly it will be a kind of injustice to these municipalities if we take it away from them. I oppose this motion.

Mr. A. B. Salem (Mattancheri): My only object was to call public attention to these matters and to have a discussion inside the House as to the system that we are following, the drawbacks that are inherent in it and the difficulties facing the people. I had absolutely no intention of pressing this to a division or to have a victory in this House for the proposition. Now that the Hon'ble Commissioner states that the system that has already been attempted is working satisfactorily in the municipalities, there is no need for rationing yet in the country, I do not think that I should press this motion to a division.

Resolution, by leave, withdrawn

RESOLUTION No. 4

Ensuring a fair price to the cultivators

Mr. A. V. Moothedan (Chalakkudi): I beg to move the following resolution. "This Council recommends to the Government that in the interest of the Food Production Drive in the State, the producers may be guaranteed reasonable prices for their agricultural products". I shall explain the scope of this resolution by referring to the previous history. Till 7th December 1941, we have not experienced the difficulties of a war on our shores. But when Japan declared war against India and the Burma market was closed, we found that there was not sufficient quantity of rice for consumption in the State. Naturally people began to cultivate all available land by planting tapioca, paddy, etc., and the Government also encouraged. The Hon'ble Minister was vigorously carrying on a propaganda for inducing people to grow more food and more and more food. With that object a scheme was prepared by the Diwan and the effect of that was to give 5 acres of land to each person who applies and then to give loans also wherever necessary. The